

Weekly Column for January 25, 2007

Welcome to a special Friday edition of the weekly column where I have two important things on my mind.

Is it really almost February, and is it really this cold? Three weeks ago, we were basking in 70-degree temperatures on a Saturday afternoon. Today we are below zero. Winter in the Northeast is always an adventure.

Earlier this week, we held our first downtown forum with business owners and residents. We were very pleased with the turnout as about forty people attended the two-hour long conversation.

The actual meeting was a great success for a number of reasons, including the fact that it started an important dialogue between City government and the people invested in downtown. Many topics were broached, including crime, graffiti, weeds growing onto buildings, and a number of aesthetic changes people thought could be made.

Most people would agree that the downtown has changed significantly over the past few years, but we obviously understand there is much more to be done. There are several suggestions that we are already implementing.

One of the situations concerned the clutter in the windows of convenience stores. I have directed Code Enforcement to send a letter to the convenience stores in the City requesting that each make sure they are following the City code in regards to space on their windows. We have included a copy of the code with the letter.

After allowing the stores some time to voluntarily remove the excessive signage, code enforcement will inspect each of the stores.

Police Chief Kaiser and Police Captain John Reigert also attended the meeting, and will be following up on issues.

It is my plan to have more of these meetings, and hopefully be able to receive updates as to which situations have improved and others that need attention. Most of the issues discussed Wednesday evening can be fixed rather quickly; there seem to be no horrendous conditions that cannot be improved, and that is a step in the right direction.

As always, if you need anything, please do not hesitate to contact my office at your convenience.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy